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RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 2385
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY 7567
RUALSFJ/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000188

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SUBJECT: CODEL INOUEY DISCUSSES FUTENMA AND HAITI WITH
JAPAN'S PRIME MINISTER

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission James P. Zumwalt; reasons 1.4 (b
/d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Hatoyama told CODEL Inouye on January 15 that he hopes to enhance the U.S.-Japan Alliance to contribute further to regional and global peace and prosperity. In order to deepen his relationship of trust with President Obama, the PM said he wanted to reach a decision on the relocation of Futenma Marine Corps Air Station by the end of May. Although Japan has ended its Indian Ocean refueling mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Japan nevertheless will continue to contribute to the prosperity and happiness of the Afghan people. Japan is also considering sending rapid emergency assistance to Haiti, in coordination with the U.S. government and the international community, PM Hatoyama said. End summary.

2. (C) In their January 15 meeting with Prime Minister Hatoyama, Senators Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Thad Cochran (R-Mississippi) explained that they came to Japan as leaders of the Senate Appropriations Committee to gather information on Japan's position regarding the relocation of Futenma Marine Corps Air Station. While expressing a willingness to be patient, Senator Inouye noted that the Congress has appropriated a sizable amount of funds to enable the relocation of a portion of the Marines on Okinawa to Guam per the the Guam International Agreement. Based on their meetings with the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs as well as key Diet members on this trip, Senator Inouye said he would be able to report back positively in Washington. The Senators emphasized the importance of the U.S.-Japan Alliance in maintaining peace and prosperity in the region, noting the priority both Secretary Clinton and President Obama have placed on this relationship. PM Hatoyama replied that the U.S.- Japan Alliance is the most important bilateral relationship in Japan's diplomacy. He said he hoped to enhance and develop the Alliance to contribute further to regional and global peace and prosperity. In order to deepen his relationship of trust with President Obama, Hatoyama said

he wanted to reach a decision on the relocation of Futenma Marine Corps Air Station by the end of May. Senator Inouye expressed appreciation for the PM,s pledge to settle the issue by May.

13. (C) Noting that Japan had ended its Indian Ocean refueling mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, PM Hatoyama said Japan nevertheless will continue to contribute to the prosperity and happiness of the Afghan people and would seek enhanced information exchange with the USG on this topic. With regard to the recent earthquake in Haiti, PM Hatoyama said Japan is still struggling to understand the extent of the damage there, but is considering sending rapid emergency assistance, in coordination with the U.S. government and the international community. (Note: The same day, Japan dispatched to Haiti a Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF) medical team with supplies and equipment. The JSDF sent an additional larger contingent of medical personnel to Haiti on January 23. End Note.)

14. (C) Senator Inouye expressed appreciation for the GOJ,s efforts in Haiti, noting that this was the worst natural disaster to ever hit the Caribbean region, with deaths possibly exceeding 100,000. He added that much of the damage occurred in Haiti,s central government district, leaving the country leaderless. PM Hatoyama said earlier in the day he had attended a central disaster prevention conference in Tokyo where experts told him the probability of a major earthquake striking Tokyo in the next 50 years is about ninety percent. So the problem of an earthquake incapacitating the government is not only an issue for other countries, but one for which Japan must prepare as well.

TOKYO 00000188 002 OF 002

Senator Cochran noted the important role played by the U.S. military in responding to natural disasters like the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami with humanitarian assistance. PM Hatoyama commended U.S. service members for their role in humanitarian relief efforts, and praised the U.S. military,s deployment to Haiti with its emphasis on saving lives.

15. (U) The CODEL cleared this cable.

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